

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 JIDDA 01290 01 OF 03 190644Z
ACTION PM-05

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 H-01 INR-10 L-03
NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00
INRE-00 MCE-00 ACDA-12 EB-08 COME-00 TRSE-00 HA-05
AF-10 /083 W

-----100358 190754Z /20

O 190535Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1130
INFO SECDEF WASHDC//ISA/DSAA//
CHUSMTM DHAHRAN
USCINCEUR//J-4/7//

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 3 JIDDA 1290

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, SA, US
SUBJECT: SALE OF F-15'S TO SAUDI ARABIA--VISIT OF UNDER SECRETARY
BENSON

SUMMARY: DURING A MEETING JANUARY 13 IN RIYADH WITH UNDER
SECRETARY BENSON AND AMBASSADOR WEST, SAUDI VICE MINISTER
OF DEFENSE, PRINCE TURKI BIN ABDUL AZIZ, EMPHASIZED THE
DEFENSIVE NATURE OF SAUDI ARABIA'S ARMED FORCES MODERNIZA-
TION PROGRAM. TURKI SAID THAT THE F-15 WILL BE USED TO
PROTECT THE KNOGDOM'S NATURAL RESOURCES AND WILL NOT REPEAT
NOT BE USED FOR AGGRESSION OUTSIDE ITS BORDERS. PRINCE
TURKI ALSO MADE THESE POINTS: (A) SAUDI ARABIA WILL NOT RPT NOT
PERMIT OTHER COUNTRIES TO TRAIN ON OR OPERATE THE F-15;
(B) SAUDI ARABIA WILL NOT RPT NOT TRANSFER THE PLANES OUTSIDE ITS
BORDERS; AND (C) SAUDI ARABIA WILL STATION THE F-15 "IN DEPTH AND
NOT RPT NOT ON THE PERIPHERY", INDICATING THAT SAG DOES
NOT RPT NOT PLAN TO BASE THE F-15 AT TABUK.
END SUMMARY.

1. IN A MEETING WITH UNDER SECRETARY BENSON AND AMBASSADOR
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 JIDDA 01290 01 OF 03 190644Z

WEST, VICE MINDEF PRINCE TURKI BIN ABDUL AZIZ REVIEWED
SAUDI ARABIA'S ARMED FORCES MODERNIZATION PROGRAM AND DIS-
CUSSED IN DETAIL THE SAUDI REQUEST TO PURCHASE THE F-15. THE
MEETING TOOK PLACE IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM AT THE MINISTRY.
OTHER SAG PARTICIPANTS WERE, CHIEFHOF GENERAL STAFF GENERAL
HUMAID; AIR FORCE CHIEF LT. GEN, ZUHAIR; ARMY CHIEF LT.
GEN, AL ASH SHAYKH; GB SALOOM, DIRECTOR OF P/P/B FOR MODA;

BG KHALIFA, DIRECTOR OF MODA PRIVATE OFFICE; FOREIGN CONTRACTS CHIEF COL. MALIK AND AF MAJOR (PRINCE) MUGRIN. ON THE U.S. SIDE WERE SPECIAL ASSISTANT LESLIE BROWN, CHUSMTM BGEN CATHEY. SPECIAL COUNSELOR SABBAGH, POLITICAL POUNSELOR BOVIS AND POLITICAL MILITARY OFFICER LEWIS.

2. AMBASSADOR WEST BEGAN THE MEETING BY REITERATING THE COMMITMENT OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT TO GO AHEAD WITH THE F-15 SALE. HE INTRODUCED MRS. BENSON AS THE ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL SELECTED BY PRESIDENT CARTER TO PRESENT THE SAUDI REQUEST TO CONGRESS AND TO MANAGE THE EFFORT TO GET IT APPROVED.

3. AFTER BRIEF WELCOMING REMARKS PRINCE TURKI SAID THAT HE WAS PLEASED THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WAS GOING FORWARD QUICKLY WITH THE FIRST STEP TOWARD THE F-15 SALE. HE SAID THAT SAUDI ARABIA ALWAYS TURNED TO THE U.S. FOR ITS MAJOR DEFENSE NEEDS BECAUSE OF THE TIME-HONORED SAUDI-AMERICAN CLOSE TIES AND, "LET'S FACE IT, AMERICAN EQUIPMENT IS THE BEST AVAILABLE". HE SAID THAT HE WANTED TO BEGIN TRAINING AS SOON AS POSSIBLE BECAUSE IT WILL BE NECESSARY TO ABSORB THE NEW AIRCRAFT ON SCHEDULE.

4. PRINCE TURKI SAID THAT IN ITS ENTIRE HISTORY, SAUDI ARABIA HAD NEVER BEEN AN AGGRESSOR AGAINST ANY COUNTRY. ON THE CONTRARY, HE SAID, SAUDI ARABIA HAS SOUGHT PEACE
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 JIDDA 01290 01 OF 03 190644Z

AND STABILITY BOTH INTERNALLY IN THE MIDDLE EAST REGION AND IN THE WORLD AS A WHOLE. "IT IS PERHAPS WORTH REPEATING THAT THE REASON WE WANT THE F-15 IS TO PROTECT OUR PEOPLE. OUR COUNTRY, AND OUR NATURAL RESOURCES WHICH ARE IN THE INTERESTS OF BOTH OUR COUNTRIES". HE SAID THAT CROWN PRINCE FAHD WAS ANXIOUS TO MOVE FORWARD QUICKLY WITH THE F-15 PROGRAM BECAUSE SAUDI ARABIA DOES NOT WANT TO BE LEFT "AS AN OASIS OF MILITARY IMPOTENCE". TURKE ADDED: "WE ARE USED TO DEALING WITH THE U.S. WE PREFER NOT TO GO LOOKING SOMEWHERE ELSE".

5. PRINCE TURKI REPEATEDLY REFERRED TO THE IMPORTANCE OF ISLAM IN THE FORMULATION OF SAUDI DEFENSE AND FOREIGN POLICY. HE SAID SAUDI ARABIA IS THE CUSTODIAN OF THE TWO MOST HOLY PLACES IN ISLAM AND THEIR PRESENCE IS A FACT OF VITAL IMPORTANCE. SAUDI ARABIA HAS AN OBLIGATION TO DEFEND THESE HOLY PLACES.

6. ANOTHER FACTOR IN SAUDI ARABIA'S DEFENSE POLICY, HE SAID, IS "OUR STRATEGIC POSITION. WE ARE AT THE CROSSROADS OF THREE CONTINENTS. INDEED, WE ARE A CONTINENT OURSELVES, JUST LOOK AT THE VAST SIZE OF OUR COUNTRY. WE ARE SURROUNDED

BY MANY COUNTRIES. MOST ARE FRIENDLY NOW, BUT THERE IS NO
GUARANTEE THAT THEY WILL REMAIN SO FOREVER**

7. HE SAID THAT 60 F-15'S COULD BE THOUGHT OF AS NOT RPT
NOT BEING ENOUGH AIRCRAFT. HE SAID THAT SAUDI ARABIA IS
SO LARGE THAT TO HAVE COMPLETE COVERAGE WOULD REQUIRE HUN-
DREDS OF AIRCRAFT AND HUNDREDS OF RADARS. TURKI ADDED THAT
BECAUSE OF MANPOWER SHORTAGES OF SAUDI ARABIA'S ARMED FORCES
MODERNIZATION PROGRAM MUST BE REASONABLE. "WE ARE NOT
GREEDY. WE PAY THE DEMANDED CASH PRICE FOR WHAT WE GET,
AND WHAT WE ARE NOW ASKING FOR IS A MINIMUM OF OUR NEEDS".

8. HE SAID THAT 18 INTERNATIONAL AIR ROUTES PASS OVER
SAUDI ARABIA. HE SAID THAT THE SAG IS TRYING TO REDUCE
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 JIDDA 01290 01 OF 03 190644Z

THAT NUMBER TO 11. "DO YOU KNOW THAT SOME THREE MONTHS
AGO WE HAD 8,000 AIRCRAFT OVER-FLYING SAUDI ARABIA IN ONE
MONTH? (THE HAJJ SEASON CONTRIBUTED TO THIS SITUATION.)

9. TURKI SAID THAT SAUDI ARABIA IS A PEACEFUL COUNTRY AND
IT IS "OUR NATURAL ASSUMPTION THAT OUR NEIGHBORS ARE OUR
FRIENDS, BUT WE WOULD BE FOOLISH TO CLOSE OUR EYES TO THE
POSSIBLIITY THAT THAT COULD CHANGE. I HOPE THAT THE U.S.
WOULD GRANT OUR MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS. NATURALLY WE WOULD
NOT SPEND MONEY ON WEAPONS OF IT WERE NOT NECESSARY. BUT
WE HAVE TO BE PRACTICAL".

10. "SAUDI ARABIA IS NO LONGER JUST A PAGE IN THE GEOGRAPHY
BOOKS. MANY COUNTRIES LOOK AT US WITH ENVY. THESE

SECRET

NNN

SECRET

PAGE 01 JIDDA 01290 02 OF 03 190701Z
ACTION PM-05

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 H-01 INR-10 L-03
NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00
INRE-00 MCE-00 ACDA-12 EB-08 COME-00 TRSE-00 HA-05
AF-10 /083 W

-----100422 190753Z /20

O 190535Z FEB 78

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1131
INFO SECDEF WASHDC//ISA/DSAA//
CHUSMTM DHAHRAN
USCINCEUR//J-4/7//

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 3 JIDDA 1290

COUNTRIES LOOK TO US WITH ENVY BECAUSE: (A) WE BELIEVE IN THE PRINCIPLES OF ISLAM WHICH WE ATTEMPT TO UPHOLD UNIVERSALLY, (B) WE BELIEVE IN, AND WORK FOR, PEACE AND SECURITY IN OUR REGION AND THE WORLD, AND (C) WE BELIEVE IN USING OUR SINGLE, MOST IMPORTANT RAW MATERIAL FOR THE BENEFIT OF OUR FRIENDS IN THE FREE WORLD".

11. "WE ARE DEAD-SET AGAINST COMMUNISM AND AGAINST ALL IDEOLOGIES THAT ARE Destructive. THAT IS ANOTHER REASON CERTAIN PEOPLE WILL BE AGAINST US. WE HAVE CONSISTENTLY STOOD UP AGAINST COMMUNISM AND WE HAVE CONSISTENTLY STOOD WITH THE U.S. KING ABDULAZIZ HAD THE FORESIGHT TO CHOOSE THE U.S. AS A FRIEND AND OUR FRIENDSHIP GOES BACK MANY YEARS TO THE DAYS OF PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT AND HIS HISTORIC MEETING WITH KING ABDUL AZIZ. THAT COMMITMENT HAS BEEN ADHERED TO EVER SINCE. KING KHALID AND CROWN PRINCE FAHD HAVE BEEN STRENGTHENING AND DEEPENING THAT COMMITMENT".

12. "AS YOU KNOW THERE ARE MANY DANGERS AROUND THE WORLD, AND COMMUNISM THRIVES IN A SOCIETY WHERE THERE IS UNEMPLOYMENT AND POVERTY." PRINCE TURKI SAID.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 JIDDA 01290 02 OF 03 190701Z

13. "SAUDI ARABIA HAS CONSISTENTLY CONDUCTED ITS POLICY FOR THE WELFARE AND IMPROVEMENT OF THE FREE WORLD, AND IN RETURN, WE ASK OUR FRIENDS FOR ONLY WHAT THEY ARE CAPABLE OF PROVIDING. THAT IS WHY WE HOPE THAT THE U.S. WILL GRANT OUR REQUEST. NOT ONLY IN THE MILITARY AREA BUT ALSO IN THE BROADER AREA OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, BECAUSE IT WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THE WELFARE OF BOTH OF OUR COUNTRIES".

14. PRINCE TURKI SAID HE WAS AWARE OF THE LEGISLATIVE OBSTACLES AND THE RESTRICTIONS PLACED ON MILITARY EQUIPMENT. HE SAID THAT SAUDI ARABIA HAS NOT SOUGHT LOANS TO PAY FOR THIS MILITARY EQUIPMENT. "WE PAY WHAT YOU ASK--SOMETIMES EVEN MORE". HE REFERRED TO THE \$1.6 BILLION THAT IS IN NON-INTEREST BEARING ACCOUNTS IN THE U.S.

15. HE SAID HE WAS MAKING A PLEA THAT ALL THESE FACTORS BE CONSIDERED WHEN SAUDI ARABIA MADE ITS REQUEST FOR DEFENSIVE EQUIPMENT. "IT WOULD BE TRAGIC, AND IT IS NOT IN

ANYONE'S INTEREST, TO BE DRIVEN IN OTHER DIRECTIONS. IT IS CONTRARY TO OUR INTERESTS. WE ARE FULLY AWARE OF THE AMERICAN PUBLIC MOOD AND WE WANT TO HELP CONGRESS UNDERSTAND THE VITAL IMPORTANCE OF SAUDI ARABIA".

16. PRINCE TURKI SAID THAT KING ABDUL AZIZ, KING FAISAL, AND NOW KING KHALID HAVE LAID DOWN THE POLICY OF "NEVER FIGHT BEYOND THE BORDERS". (AT THIS POINT MAJOR (PRINCE) MUGRIN BIN ABDUL AZIZ BROKE IN TO SAY "AND AT THE BORDERS WE STOP.") PRINCE TURKI CONTINUED BY CITING REPORTS OF RUSSIONS AND CUBANS, SOUTH YEMEN AND ETHIOPIAN TROOPS INVOLVED IM SOMALIA.

17. HE SAID THAT IT HAD CAUSED SADNESS IN HIS HEART TO
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 JIDDA 01290 02 OF 03 190701Z

SEE RUSSIA SO INVOLVED IN SOMALIA. "BUT WE TALKED TO PRESIDENT SIAD BARRE AND HE FINALLY SAW THE LIGHT, AND AS A RESULT HE GOT RID OF THE RUSSIANS. BUT HE WAS LEFT HOLDING THE BAG FULL OF AIR. NOW HE HAS RUSSIANS, CUBANS, AND ETHIOPIANS, WITH ISRAEL'S HELP AND ENCOURAGEMENT, RAIDING HIS COUNTRY LIKE BANDITS DID IN THE 17TH AND 18TH CENTURY".

18. "THEY HAVE TROOPS IN AFRICA ALL THE WAY FROM CUBA-- FOR WHAT?" HE SAID THAT THERE ARE 32 EXPERT CUBAN PILOTS FLYING MISSIONS AGAINST SOMALIA AND HE SAID THAT IN RETURN THE SOVIET UNION SENT TO CUBA 29 RUSSIAN PILOTS TO REPLACE THEM.

19. HE SAID IF SOMALIA FALLS BECAUSE OF THIS JOINT INVASION THEN IT WILL BE TAKEN OVER BY THE COMMUNISTS. "IT WOULD BE AUTOMATIC THAT THE FIRE WOULD SPREAD TO SUDAN AND THEN EGYPT, WITH NOTHING TO STOP IT FROM SPEEDING TO THE ARABIAN PENINSULA".

20. HE SAID THAT IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE THE REFUELING STOPS DURING THE SOVIET AIRLIFT TO ETHIOPIA: IRAQ-ADEN AND THEN ETHIOPIA. "WE'RE IN A Pincer MOVEMENT. THE RUSSIANS, OR THEIR AGENTS, ARE ALL AROUND US".

21. PRINCE TURKI SAID THAT HE HAD HEARD THAT THERE IS A PLAN BY SOUTH YEMEN TO CLOSE THE BAB EL MANDEB STRAITS. "BOTH OF US KNOW WHAT A DANGER THAT WOULD BE. SOMETHING HAS TO BE DONE FAST IN SOMALIA".

22. PRINCE TURKI CONCLUDED BY SAYING "WE COULD TALK ABOUT THE COMMUNIST DANGER FOR HOURS. WHAT YOU ARE HERE FOR IS TO DISCUSS THE REQUEST FOR OUR ARMED FORCES WHICH I HOPE WOULD BE FAVORABLY AND EXPEDITIOUSLY CONSIDERED.

23. MRS. BENSON TOLD PRINCE TURKI THAT PRESIDENT CARTER
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 JIDDA 01290 02 OF 03 190701Z

WAS DEEPLY COMMITTED NOT ONLY TO ASSISTING SAUDI ARABIA
IN BUILDING A DEFENSIVE CAPABILITY BUT ALSO TO THE STRONG
FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. SHE SAID THAT PRINCE
TURKI'S REMARKS ON THE SITUATION ON THE HORN OF AFRICA
WERE MOST INTERESTING.

24. MRS. BENSON SAID THAT SECRETARY VANCE HAD SOME STRONG
WORDS ON THE SOMALIS SITUATION AND WARNED THAT IF THE
SOVIETS, CUBANS AND ETHIOPIANS WERE INVOLVED IN CROSS-BORDER
OPERATIONS, THE UNITED STATES WOULD HAVE TO RECONSIDER ITS
POLICY.

25. TURNING TO THE F-15 SALE, MRS. BENSON SAID THAT SHE
WANTED TO ASSURE PRINCE TURKI AND THE ROYAL FAMILY THAT
THERE IS NOT RPT NOT HOSTILITY FOR SAUDI ARABIA IN THE
UNITED STATES. "THERE IS GREAT FRIENDSHIP FOR SAUDI ARABIA
IN THE UNITED STATES". HOWEVER, SHE CONTINUED, SINCE THE
AMERICAN MILITARY INVOLVEMENT IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, THERE IS
GREAT SENSITIVITY ON THE QUESTION OF ARMS
THAT DID NOT EXISIT BEFORE.

26. PRINCE TURKI SAID THAT THE POINT WAS WELL TAKEN AND
THAT HE UNDERSTANDS THIS SENSITIVITY IN THE U.S. AND THE
DESIRE FOR RESTRAINT ON ARMS SALES. "BUT WILL THE SOVIETS
DO ANYTHING COMPARABLE OR ACT IN A RESPONSIBLE WAY".

27. PRINCE TURKI SAID THAT YOU COULD NOT TRUST THE COMMUNISTS.
" THEY EVEN CONSUME EACH OTHER. OLLK AT WHAT IS

SECRET

NNN

SECRET

PAGE 01 JIDDA 01290 03 OF 03 191015Z
ACTION PM-05

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 H-01 INR-10 L-03
NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00
INRE-00 MCE-00 ACDA-12 EB-08 COME-00 TRSE-00 HA-05
AF-10 /083 W

-----100894 191024Z /20

O 190535Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1132
INFO SECDEF WASHDC//ISA/DASS//
CHUSMTM DHAHRAN
USCINCEUR//J-4/7//

S E C R E T SECTION 3 OF 3 JIDDA 1290

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y T E X T

HAPPEING BETWEEN VIET NAM AND CAMBODIA, "HE SAID.

28. MRS. BENSON SAID THAT NEVERTHELESS THIS SENSITIVITY
WAS PART OF THE POLITICAL CLIMATE IN THE U.S. WITH WHICH
WE WILL HAVE TO DEAL IN SECURING THE F-15'S.

29. MRS. BENSON SAID THAT BEFORE THE END OF FEBRUARY, PER-
HAPS NEXT WEEK, THE PROPOSAL WOULD BE SENT TO CONGRESS ON
THE F-15 SALE. SHE POINTED OUT THAT U.S. LAW REQUIRES AT
LEAST 50 DAYS, PERHAPS LONGER, FOR THE PROPOSAL TO GO THROUGH
CONGRESS. SHE SAID THAT THIS IS A STANDARD PROCEDURE AND
THIS SHOULD BE NO CAUSE FOR WORRY.

30. SHE SAID THAT THERE ARE ALREADY MANY MEMBERS OF CON-
GRESS WHO SUPPORT THE SALE AND UNDERSTAND SAUDI ARABIA'S
DEFENSIVE NEEDS. SHE SAID THAT THERE ARE OTHERS WHO ARE
UNCERTAIN AND WHO NEED TO BE EDUCATED AND NEED TO BE CON-
VINCED OF THE NEEDS OF SAUDI ARABIA. SHE SAID THAT THE
PURPOSE OF HER VISIT WAS TO BE ABLE TO TELL MEMBERS OF
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 JIDDA 01290 03 OF 03 191015Z

CONGRESS THAT SHE HAD VISITED SAUDI ARABIA AND SAY THAT "HIS
ROYAL HIGHNESS SAID TO ME"... AND THEN TO SAY EXACTLY WHAT
WAS SAID TO HER.
THE TRIP, SHE SAID, WILL GIVE HER VIEWS MORE AUTHORITY
AND CREDIBILITY.

31. IN THAT CONNECTION, MRS. BENSON SAID THERE WERE A
NUMBER OF QUESTIONS THAT HAD BEEN ASKED BY THOSE WHO ARE
OPPOSED TO THE F-15 SALE TO SAUDI ARABIA. THESE HAVE
CAUSED SOME PROBLEMS AND SHE WOULD LIKE TO GET PRINCE
TURKI'S RESPONSE.

32. MRS. BENSON ASKED WHERE THE F-15'S WOULD BE STATIONED.

33. PRINCE TURKI REPLIED " OUR POLICY IS TO STATION THESE
PLANES INSIDE OUR BORDERS AND IN DEPTH NOT RPT NOT ON THE
PERIPHERY SO THAT NO ONE CAN THINK WE HAVE ANY AGGRESSIVE

INTENTIONS. ON BEHALF OF THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE I WANT TO UNDERSCORE THAT WE DO NOT (RPT NOT) NOR EVER INTEND TO HAVE ANY AGGRESSIVE INTENTIONS TOWARD ANY COUNTRY. OUR FRIENDS KNOW THAT THAT IS AN HISTORIC FACT. OUR WORD IS OUR BOND." (COMMENT: WE INTERPRETED THIS TO MEAN THAT SAG DOES NOT PRT NOT INTEND TO BASE THE F-15'S AT TABUK WHICH IS NEAR THE NORTHWEST FRONTIERS).

34. MRS. BENSON REPLIED THAT IT IS WELL KNOWN THAT ASUDI ARABIA ALWAYS KEPT ITS WORK.

35. MRS. BENSON THEN ASKED WHETHER SAUDI ARABIA INTENDED TO TRAIN THE PILOTS OF OTHER ARAB COUNTRIES ON THE F-15 OR TO TRANSFER THE AIRCRAFT.

36. PRINCE TURKI REPLIED: "NEVER. WE NEED TO TRAIN OUR
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 JIDDA 01290 03 OF 03 191015Z

OWN PEOPLE NOT (RPT NOT) OTHERS. THESE AIRCRAFT ARE ONLY FOR OUR OWN FORCES."

37. MRS. BENSON SAID THAT SOME HAVE SUGGESTED THAT SAUDI ARABIA WOULD BE INTERESTED IN REQUIRING THE AWACS AIRBORNE EARLY WARING AND CONTROL SYSTEM.

38. PRINCE TURKI SAID: "NO, WE ARE NOT THINKING OF THAT."

39. MRS. BENSON ASKED PRINCE TURKI ABOUT REPORTS THAT EGYPTIAN PILOTS HAVE BEEN TRAINED OF F-5'S IN DHAHRAN.

40. PRINCE TURKI SAID: /NO, NOT SO* TRUE, THERE WERE SOME EGYPTIANS VISITING DHAHRAN, AT OUR REQUEST, ABOUT TWO YEARS AGO. I WILL GIVE YOU THE REASONS WHY. IN FACT THERE WERE TWO BASIC REASONS WHY WE INVITED THE EGYPTIANS TO VISIT US. FIRST WE WERE DOING SOME OF YOUR OWN WORK-- TO UNWASH THE BRAINS OF THE EGYPTIANS WHO HAD BEEN ONLY EXPOSED TO THE RUSSINA DOCTRINE, SYSTEM AND EQUIPMENT. WE WANTED TO SHOW THEM THAT OUR EQUIPMENT AND TRAINING-- WHICH WAS PROVIDED BY THE U.S.-- WAS FIRST CLASS. WE SAID TO THE EGYPTIANS "LOOK AT WHAT WE HAVE FROM THE U.S., AND WE SAID IT WITH PRIDE."

41. PRINCE TURKI WENT ON TO SAY THAT THE EGYPTIANS DID NOT RPT NOT TRAIN ON THE F-5'S BUT RATHER WERE THERE TO EVALUATE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE AIRCRAFT AND THE TRAINING PROGRAM WITH A VIEW TO ASKING THE U.S. FOR THE AIRPLANE. HE SAID THAT IT WAS DURING THE TIME WHEN PRESIDENT SADAT HAD BECOME DISILLUSIONED WITH RUSSIAN AID AND WANTED TO TURN TO THE U.S. "I THINK WE HAVE SEEN RESULTS WHICH ARE GOOD FOR BOTH OF US."

42. HE SAID THAT THE SECOND REASON WAS THAT THE EGYPTIAN
AIR FORCE HAD SEVERAL MONTHS BEFORE INVITED A GROUP OF SAUDI
AIR FORCE OFFICERS TO VISIT EGYPT TO INSPECT THE RUSSINA
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 JIDDA 01290 03 OF 03 191015Z

AIR FORCE PROGRAM. HE SAID THAT ONE OF HIS PILOTS HAD
FOLWN IN BOTH THE MIG-21 AND SU-7 BUT DISCOVERED THAT THE
EGYPTIAN PILOTS WERE NOT TRAINED NEARLY AS WELL AND THAT
THE EQUIPMENT WAS NOT MAINTAINED PROPERLY. TURKI SAID THAT
PRINCE MUGRIN WAS ONE OF THE SAUDI PILOTS REFERRED TO.
ATTHIS POINT MUGRIN (RSAF MAJOR) EXPLAINED THAT THE
EGYPTIAN PILOTS WERE KEPT IN THE DARK BY THEIR SOVIET
INSTRUCTIRS ABOUT THE CAPABILITIES OF THE RUSSINA AIRCRAFT
AND EQUIPMENT. IT TOOK PAKISTANI EXPERTS TO ENLIGHTEN THE
EGYPTIANS LETER, MUGRIN SAID.

43. MRS. BENSON SAID THAT PRINCE TURKI'S REPLY WAS
EXTREMELY HELPFUL. SHE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT IN THE NEXT
FEW WEEKS AS THE DEBATE OVER THE F-15 SALE INCREASES THAT
THERE WOULD PERHAPS EMERGE SOME UNFLATTERING, INDEED MAYBE
SOME RUDE AND OUTRAGEOUS COMMENTS IN THE INTERNATIONAL
PRESS. "WE DO NOT WANT YOU TO BE CONCERNED ABOUT IT. IT
IS PART OF THE PROCESS TO SECURE THE SALE."

44. PRINCE TURKI SAID THAT HE UNDERSTOOD AND HE THANKED
MRS. BENSON FOR HER KIND EFFORTS AND SAID, "WE HAVE NO
FEAR, THANKS TO YOUR ADVANCE WANING OF THE POSSIBILITY
OF ADVERSE COMMENTS." HE SAID THAT CROWN PRINCE FAHD WAS
ANXIOUS TO PRESS FORWARD WITH THE SALE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE
BECAUSE THE SAUDI AIR FORCE IS IMPATIENT AND URGENTLY NEEDS
NEW ARICRAFT TO REPLACE THE LIGHTNING.

45. AMBASSADOR WEST SAID THAT THE U.S. FULLY UNDERSTANDS
THE URGENCY AND CONCERN THAT SAUDI ARABIA ATTACHES TO THE
SALE AND HE SAID THAT THE PRESIDENT'S PROMPT RESPONSE TO
PRINCE FAHD'S REQUEST HAS MADE HIS JOB EASIRE.

46. MRS. BENSON SAID THAT IT WILL NOT BE LONG BEFORE THE
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 05 JIDDA 01290 03 OF 03 191015Z

ISSUE IS RESOLVED.

47. PRINCE TURKI SAID WE HIPE THAT THE RESULT WILL BE
POSITIVE AND MRS. BENSON REPOIED "I WILL TRY--I AM SURE
WE WILL SUCCEED."

WEST

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FIGHTER AIRCRAFT, MINISTERIAL VISITS, NEGOTIATIONS, MILITARY SALES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 feb 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978JIDDA01290
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780077-0163
Format: TEL
From: JIDDA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780235/aaaabdyu.tel
Line Count: 495
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 8e1861d3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION PM
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 10
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3543838
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SALE OF F-15'S TO SAUDI ARABIA--VISIT OF UNDER SECRETARY BENSON SUMMARY: DURING A MEETING JANUARY 13 IN RIYADH WIT
TAGS: MASS, SA, US, (BENSON, LUCY WILSON)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/8e1861d3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014